

Re-evaluation Strategy

May 2002

Introduction

By court order (Sumner Peck Ranch v. Reclamation) Reclamation is required to provide drainage service to the San Luis Unit (SLU) of the Central Valley Project (CVP). The Appellate Court Ruling states: "...the Department of the Interior...Shall without delay, provide drainage to the San Luis Unit pursuant to the statutory duty imposed by section 1(a) of the San Luis Act." Reclamation has interpreted its role in this process is to:

- Determine which lands need drainage to maintain the arability of the soil throughout the SLU
- Determine the size of an interceptor drain and other facilities to meet the drainage requirement
- Determine an approach for treating and disposing drain water.

The following fact sheet briefly outlines Reclamation's plan to develop a preferred plan to provide drainage service.

To comply with the court order, Reclamation must bring together a diverse collection of technical, environmental, political, and stakeholder issues to develop a practical drainage solution. Reclamation has developed a three-pronged plan of action to identify a long-term solution that is technically feasible and politically acceptable:

1. Technical analysis of long-term collection, treatment and disposal of the drainage water

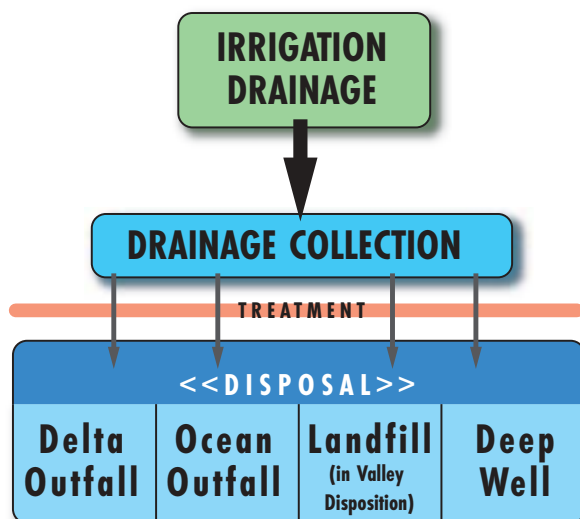
2. Effective stakeholder outreach that provides for meaningful input by affected parties throughout the process
3. Short-term mitigation that may provide relief to farmers on affected lands

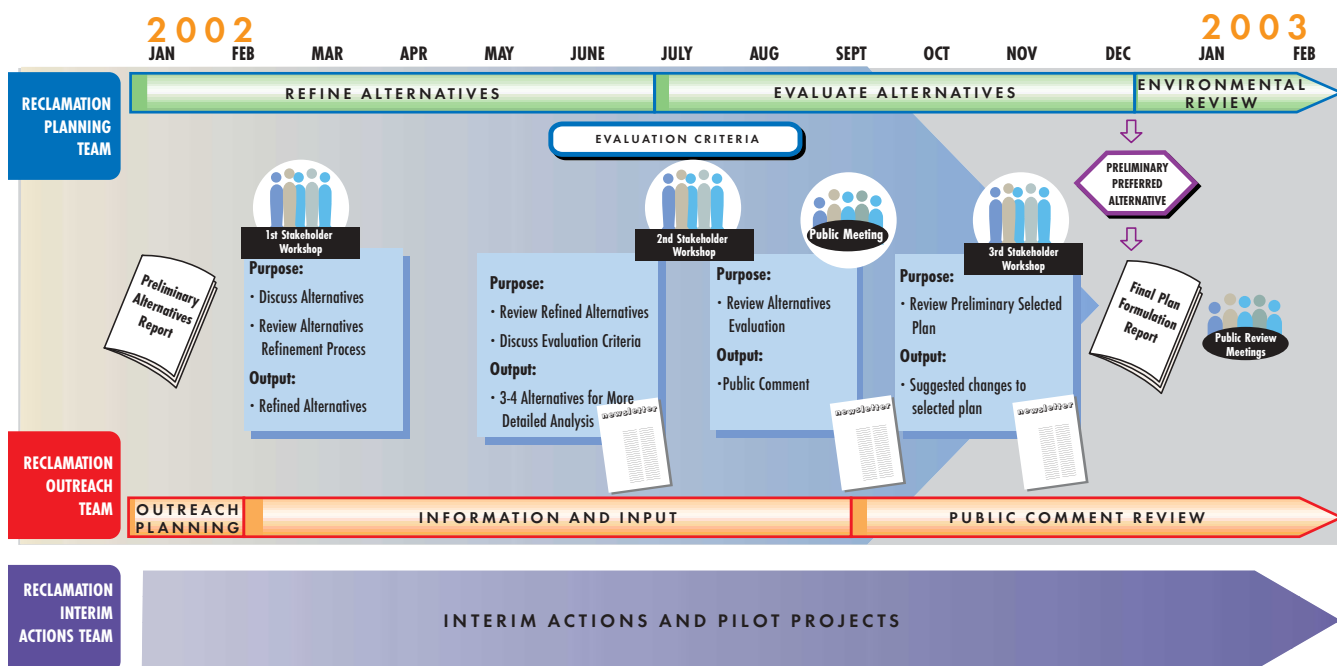
The goal is to bring together sound technical analysis and stakeholder support to develop a single preferred alternative to provide drainage service to the San Luis Unit.

Technical Approach

Reclamation is evaluating drainage by focusing on two separate but dependent processes:

1. Drainage management; including on-farm practices and land retirement, that will help determine the volume of drainage water disposal needed to ensure the long term, sustainable salt and water balance in the root zone of irrigated lands
2. Drainage service; including the collection, treatment and disposal of drainage water





Additionally, Reclamation has indicated that only drainage solutions that are technically demonstrated can be considered as part of the solution to meet the court order. Solutions that are not technically demonstrated to provide drainage service may be evaluated separately as a pilot project or a parallel study

Pilot Programs and Short-Term Solutions

Reclamation understands that the development of a long-term drainage solution may take some time, and recognizes a need to identify short-term relief for farmers. Pilot programs in the Grasslands Water District, Rainbow Ranch, and Red Rock Ranch will be evaluated to determine if they have application to the Re-evaluation effort. Additionally, technologies that have demonstrated uses in other areas, for example deep-well injection, will be assessed as well.

Stakeholder Outreach and Input

Reclamation has identified stakeholder input as a key component to the success of the Feature Re-evaluation process. Stakeholders, including the agricultural community, environmental groups, agencies, and policy makers, are being engaged through workshops and focused outreach meetings to provide early and meaningful input into the evaluation process.

Results

Reclamation intends to present the Court with a drainage solution that has the greatest chance of implementation. Over the next few months Reclamation will evaluate a range of drainage solutions, drainage need scenarios, and continue to engage key stakeholders and the public in the process. We invite you to stay informed through these fact sheets, by visiting our web-site, or coming to public meetings that will be held throughout the process.

Contact us!

Jason Phillips, Project Manager
San Luis Drainage Feature Re-evaluation
2800 Cottage Way, MP 700
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 978-5070

E-mail: jphillips@mp.usbr.gov
Website: <http://www.mp.usbr.gov/sccao/sld>